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BAR AND RESTAURANT RECYCLING CASE STUDY: MELLOW MUSHROOM

Recycling Since: opening**Type of facility:** casual dining, serving food, beer, wine and mixed drinks**Serves:** 5-6,000 customers weekly**Recycles:** brown, clear and green glass, metal and cardboard**Average cost of service:** \$120/month for weekly container recycling; \$500/month for biweekly trash and cardboard***cost of trash collection would increase if recycling was eliminated*

Frequent visitors of the delicious trendy pizza joint in downtown Raleigh may not know what is going on behind the scenes, but they are contributing to a greater good. When the Mellow Mushroom opened in Raleigh the restaurant owners didn't think twice about setting up recycling collection. At another Mushroom location in Chapel Hill, recycling was required so it was just logical to continue the effort.

Mellow Mushroom educates all new employees about the program when they start. Issues that arise are addressed at the start of the shift so everyone knows about it. Overall, recycling has not raised any problems.

When tables are bussed, bottles are brought back to the kitchen along with dirty dishes and the trays. In the kitchen, small white buckets are located beneath the staging area for the transfer of dirty plates and trays to the dishwasher, and recyclables are placed in these small containers. When the buckets are full, dishwashers and bussers take the materials outside and separate them into one of the eight outdoor barrels that are collected weekly. Usually they fill four barrels with brown glass, one with green glass, one with clear glass, and two with metals.

This location also has two Dumpsters—one for trash and another for cardboard. If all the glass, aluminum, and plastic bottles were put in the trash rather than recycling, managers estimate they'd have to add at least one additional trash collection each week.



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For a PDF of this case study, click [here](#).



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